

Message Text

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PAGE 01 USUN N 01005 282218Z

61

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C O N F I D E N T I A L USUN 1005

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, UN, PLO

SUBJ: MEETING WITH NYC MAYOR AND JEWISH LEADERS

RE PLO STATUS IN UN

1. AT REQUEST OF MAYOR BEAME, AMB SCALI MET MAR 25 WITH HIM AND JEWISH LEADERS WHO HAD BEEN PRESSING FOR RESTRICTIONS ON PLO PRESENCE IN NEW YORK. SPOKESMAN FOR JEWISH COMMUNITY WAS RABBI ISRAEL MILLER, PRESIDENT OF CONFERENCE OF PRESIDENTS OF MAJOR AMERICAN JEWISH ORGANIZATIONS, ACCOMPANIED BY YEHUDA HELLMAN AND RICHARD COHEN, BOTH FROM THE CONFERENCE. ALSO ATTENDING WERE DEPUTY MAYOR STANLEY FRIEDMAN AND AMB WHITE.

2. MAYOR OPENED MEETING BY REFERRING TO CITY'S CONCERNS, PARTICULARLY REGARDING SECURITY, AS WELL AS OF JEWISH COMMUNITY REPRESENTED BY RABBI MILLER.

3. MILLER AND COLLEAGUES EXPRESSED THEIR STRONG FEELINGS THAT PLO SHOULD NOT BE GIVEN "TRAPPINGS OF A STATE" AND THAT A "GROUP OF THUGS" SHOULD NOT BE ACCORDED ANY PRIVILEGES NOT LEGALLY IMPOSED UPON US GOVT OR NYC. THEY SPECIFICALLY QUESTIONED (1) NUMBER OF PERSONS TO BE ALLOWED IN OBSERVER GROUP, (2) LENGTH OF TIME THEY WOULD BE PERMITTED TO STAY, (3) WHETHER THEY WOULD RECEIVE ANY PRIVILEGES AND IMMUNITIES, AND (4) WHERE THEY WOULD BE
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 USUN N 01005 282218Z

PERMITTED TO MOVE BEYOND THE UN ITSELF. IN EACH CASE

THEY REQUESTED MOST RESTRICTIVE POSSIBLE TREATMENT. THEY ARGUED FOR ONLY ONE PLO OFFICE RATHER THAN TWO AND FOCUSED PARTICULARLY ON INFORMATION OFFICE, ASKING WHY NYC SHOULD BE FORCED TO HOST "MURDER INCORPORATED", WHICH WAS THREAT TO SECURITY OF ITS CITIZENS.

4. AMB SCALI POINTED OUT THAT UN RESOLUTIONS GAVE PLO BROAD SCOPE AS OBSERVERS AND THAT RESOLUTION, PASSED OVER OUR OPPOSITION, PLACED LEGAL RESPONSIBILITIES ON US UNDER HEADQUARTERS AGREEMENT TO ENABLE PLO TO FULFILL ITS AUTHORIZED FUNCTIONS. THE CYCLE OF MEETINGS IN NEW YORK WAS CONTINUOUS, HENCE PLO PRESENCE COULD NOT BE RESTRICTED TO LIMITED AND SPECIFIED PERIODS. HE THEN POINTED TO DIFFERENCE BETWEEN DECISIONS THAT WERE UP TO SECRETARY GENERAL (E.G. LISTING IN BLUE BOOK), ON WHICH US COULD HAVE AN INFLUENCE BUT COULD NOT DETERMINE; AND THOSE UP TO US (E.G. TYPES OF VISAS, CONDITIONS ATTACHED, PRIVILEGES AND IMMUNITIES). DECISIONS ON THE LATTER, HE SAID, WERE NOW UNDER ACTIVE CONSIDERATION IN WASHINGTON. HE HAD MADE KNOWN HIS OWN VIEWS THAT FACILITIES FOR PLO SHOULD BE MINIMUM CONSISTENT WITH US LEGAL OBLIGATIONS AND US INTERESTS (AND LATTER INEVITABLY INCLUDED OUR OVERALL RELATIONS WITH ARAB COUNTRIES AS WELL AS PALESTINIANS.) HE ALSO INDICATED HIS PREFERENCE, FOR SECURITY REASONS, FOR HAVING INFORMATION AND OBSERVER OFFICES IN SAME LOCALE. MAYOR BEAME AGREED.

5. AMB SCALI REFUSED TO BE DRAWN INTO SPECIFIC COMMITMENTS, POINTING TO EXTREMELY SENSITIVE SITUATION IN MIDDLE EAST FOLLOWING SECRETARY KISSINGER'S RETURN FROM ABORTED MISSION, AND THAT DECISIONS WERE NOT UNDER REVIEW IN WASHINGTON.

6. MAYOR BEAME INDICATED HIS PREFERENCE THAT POL PERSONNEL BE LIMITED TO MANHATTAN, PARTICULARLY FROM VIEWPOINT OF BURDENS ON NEW YORK POLICE. DEPUTY MAYOR FRIEDMAN STATED THAT, IN RESPONSE TO REQUEST OF JEWISH LEADERS, NYC CORPORATION COUNSEL HAD REVIEWED LEGAL ASPECTS OF SITUATION AND COULD FIND NO IMPEDIMENT THAT NYC COULD LEGALLY PLACE ON PLO OFFICE HERE.

CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 03 USUN N 01005 282218Z

COMMENT: TONE OF MEETING WAS FRIENDLY ALTHOUGH JEWISH LEADERS WERE PRESSING HARD FOR COMMITMENTS THEY DID NOT GET EITHER FROM MAYOR OR AMB SCALI. DEPUTY MAYOR FRIEDMAN LATER TOLD AMB WHITE THAT MAYOR FOUND MEETING MOST USEFUL BECAUSE IT BROUGHT THREE PARTIES TOGETHER AND EACH KNEW EXACTLY WHAT OTHERS HAD (AND HAD NOT) SAID. PRESSURES BY JEWISH COMMUNITY ON MAYOR ARE OBVIOUSLY INTENSE.

FROM COMMENTS OF MILLER AND HELLMAN, IT SEEMS POSSIBLE
THAT THEY MAY BE CONSIDERING TAKING SOME ACTION, LEGAL OR
OTHERWISE, AGAINST PLO INFORMATION OFFICE HERE. THEY MAY
HAVE CONCLUDED THAT SINCE THEY CANNOT BLOCK OBSERVER OFFICE,
THIS IS THE PLACE TO CONCENTRATE. GIVEN ALL FACTORS,
INCLUDING SECURITY, MIGHT IT BE WELL TO ENCOURAGE PLO TO
CONSIDER POSSIBLE ADVANTAGE OF A SINGLE OFFICE, COMBINING
BOTH INFORMATION AND OPERATIONS FUNCTIONS? (PLO HAS ALREADY
TOLD US (USUN 650) THAT IT PLANS TO COMBINE TWO OFFICES
PHYSICALLY FOR REASONS OF EFFICIENCY AND SECURITY.)
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